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## **Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas Calls for Safety, Economic Protections for the Crenshaw/LAX Light Rail Corridor**

Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas introduced a Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board motion Thursday calling for Metro to create a fund for business losses caused by construction of the Crenshaw/LAX light rail line, and for the agency to devise plans for safety, local worker hiring and streetscape improvements along the route.

"The Crenshaw/LAX line project is moving fast ahead. As it is being built we must also make sure the community doesn't pay too high a price for its long-overdue rail service," Ridley-Thomas said.

"The rail line is meant to cut traffic and improve safety, so I want Metro to come up with solid plans to make sure that happens. The line should also be built with workers from the community, and businesses disrupted by the construction need to be compensated," he said.

Ridley-Thomas' motion to create a "Community Benefits Package," introduced at Thursday's board meeting, will be placed on the agenda of the board's August 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The motion calls for Metro's Chief Executive Officer to devise plans for:

- Safety along the street-level segment of the line on Crenshaw Boulevard between 48<sup>th</sup> Street and 59<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Traffic mitigation on the same segment to reduce congestion from the current "F" rating to at least a "C" grade.
- A Local Worker Hiring Program to assure at least 30% of workers are from the local area and 10% are disadvantaged workers, as well as a program to grant 30% of contracting to small business enterprises.
- A business mitigation fund to assist local businesses impacted by the construction.
- A sidewalk, streetscape and local business improvement plan on Crenshaw Boulevard from Vernon Avenue to Stocker Street to enhance the corridor connecting Leimert Park to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Transit Station.

In May, the Metro board rejected a Ridley-Thomas proposal to put the rail line underground in the Park Mesa Heights community, between 48<sup>th</sup> Street and 59<sup>th</sup> Street along Crenshaw Boulevard.

The board also voted then to approve a Leimert Park Village station, but did not authorize money to pay for the addition, leaving its future in question.

Ridley-Thomas said he is working to ensure the Leimert Park Village station gets built. Meanwhile, his motion seeks to maximize the benefits of the rail project to the community.

"As we continue to press for a rail station in Leimert Park Village, the cultural center of African American Los Angeles, we must also make sure construction of the project promotes the economic growth that is the foundation of that rich cultural life," Ridley-Thomas said.

"When the Leimert Park Village station is built, it must be surrounded by a thriving community of small businesses and safe and secure communities. With proper planning, Metro can ensure the Crenshaw/LAX light rail project is a win-win for all," he said.

Ridley-Thomas noted the Crenshaw/LAX rail project is now on track for completion in 2016. The project had earlier been designated as a bus-way with a 2029 completion date. The 8.5 mile line will run from Exposition Boulevard and Crenshaw Boulevard to Los Angeles International Airport.

<http://ridley-thomas.lacounty.gov/transportation/>

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